DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 275 092 EC 190 616

TITLE	Alternative Testing Techniques for Students with Handicapping Conditions. Revised.
INSTITUTION	New York State Education Dept. Albany. Office for the Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions.
REPORT NO	NYSED-86-6540
PUB DATE	May 86
NOTE	20p.; Supersedes ED 220 482.
AVAILABLE FROM	New York State Education Department, Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions, Division of Program Development, Room 1071 Education Building, Albany, NY 12234, ATTN: Alternative Testing Techniques for Students with Handicapping Conditions.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Achievement Tests; Communication Aids (for Disabled); *Disabilities; Educational Diagnosis; Elementary Secondary Education; Eligibility; Sensory Aids; *Standardized Tests; *Test Format; *Testing Problems; Test Manuals
IDENTIFIERS	*Alternatives to Standardized Testing; New York; *Test Adaptations

ABSTRACT

The manual provides information on alternative testing techniques for students identified as handicapped. The first section discusses the legal basis for the use of alternative testing techniques, as well as student eligibility. Section 2 provides examples of test modifications in the following areas: (1) manner of presentation (flexible scheduling, flexible setting, revised test format and directions, use of aids); (2) manner of response (use of aids, revised answer forms); (3) process used to derive responses (use of aids). Section 3 describes different types of tests as they relate to the appropriate use of alternative testing techniques and provides information on modifications which are prohibited with specific tests. Roles and responsibilities of those involved in the testing process (Board of Education, Committee on the Handicapped, principal, regular and special class teachers, parents) are described in Section 4. A final section lists resources which provide information on the New York State testing program and other tests. (JW)

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ALTERNATIVE TESTING TECHNIQUES

FOR STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

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THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
OFFICE FOR EDUCATION OF CHILDREN
WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12234

EC190616

ALTERNATIVE TESTING TECHNIQUES FOR STUDENTS WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

May 1986

TO: School Board Presidents
District Superintendents
Superintendents of Public and Nonpublic Schools
New York City Superintendents
Elementary and Secondary Principals
Committee on the Handicapped Chairpersons
Directors of Pupil Personnel Services
Directors of Special Education
Commissioner's Advisory Panel

FROM: Lawrence C. Gloeckler, Assistant Commissioner

SUBJECT: *Alternative Testing Techniques for Students with Handicapping Conditions*

The publication, *Alternative Testing Techniques for Students with Handicapping Conditions*, was revised by the Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions to provide additional information and clarification to members of Committees on the Handicapped, Boards of Education, principals and other individuals who have responsibility for recommending, approving and implementing alternative testing techniques for students who have been identified as having a handicapping condition. It replaces the previous manual which is now out of date.

The publication includes information on the appropriate use of alternative testing techniques which allow students with handicapping conditions equal opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge in all testing situations. Definitions and examples of a variety of alternative testing techniques are included to assist teachers, related service providers, parents and students in understanding the modifications that are available and the basis on which they may be approved.

Additional copies are available from:

New York State Education Department
Office for Education of Children with Handicapping Conditions
Division of Program Development
Room 1071 Education Building
Albany, NY 12234
ATTN: Alternative Testing Techniques for Students with Handicapping Conditions

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OVERVIEW

Educational tests are administered to students throughout their schooling in order for school personnel to make sound educational decisions based on the students' abilities and needs. To ensure fairness in testing situations and to allow for an equal opportunity to demonstrate achievement and capabilities, students with handicapping conditions may be provided with alternative testing techniques.

The Federal regulations implementing the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, P.L. 94-142, state clearly that tests must be "selected and administered so as best to ensure that when a test is administered to a child with impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the child's aptitude or achievement level or whatever other factors the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills (except where those skills are the factors which the test purports to measure)."

Definition of Alternative Testing Techniques

Alternative testing techniques are modifications of testing procedures or formats which provide students with handicapping conditions equal opportunity to participate in testing situations. In the process of determining the alternative testing techniques that are appropriate for a student, the individual needs of the student are the primary consideration.

Intent of Alternative Testing Techniques

Alternative testing techniques are the means by which students with handicapping conditions participate in testing programs on an equal basis with their nonhandicapped peers. Such techniques provide the opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge without being limited or unfairly restricted by the existence of a handicapping condition.

Educational planning, both short- and long-term, is facilitated by the appropriate use of test results. All students must have equal opportunity, through testing, to demonstrate their competence and have their deficits recognized by teachers, parents and others. Procedures which allow students with handicapping conditions a different method of responding in testing situations or which change the means by which information on a test is presented are designed to equalize opportunity. The intended outcomes are test results which present an accurate description of student strengths and weaknesses.

Scope of Manual

This manual is intended to provide information on alternative testing techniques which will assist members of Committees on the Handicapped (COH) and other individuals who have responsibility for recommending, approving, or implementing alternative testing techniques for students who have been identified by the COH as having a handicapping condition. It is intended for:

- Members of Boards of Education
- Administrators of regular and special education
- Members of Committees on the Handicapped
- Teachers in regular and special education
- Related service providers
- Parents

This manual addresses testing only as it relates to use of testing modifications. It is not intended as a discussion or source of information on testing issues in general. Similarly, although this manual makes reference to the statewide testing program, it is not intended as a primary source of information on State tests and their administration. For such information, individuals should contact:

New York State Education Department
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary
Testing Programs
Room 771, Education Building Annex
Albany, NY 12234

The first section of the manual presents the basis for providing alternative testing techniques and the process of determining student need. The second section discusses different types of testing modifications and restrictions on their use. Section three describes different types of tests as they relate to the appropriate use of alternative testing techniques and provides information on testing modifications which are prohibited for use on specific tests. Roles and responsibilities for individuals who are involved in recommending, planning, and implementing alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions are described in section four, with suggested strategies for implementation. The final section lists resources which provide information on the statewide testing program and other tests.

BASIS FOR PROVIDING ALTERNATIVE TESTING TECHNIQUES

The authorization for appropriate use of alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions is based in New York State education regulations, policies and procedures. The concepts of fair accommodation and equal opportunity and access are woven throughout these mandates. Students with handicapping conditions, by definition, need special interventions and considerations to benefit fully from educational opportunities. These considerations relate to a variety of educational practices, such as modified instructional strategies, planning for programs and services as indicated on the Individualized Education Program (IEP), cooperative efforts between regular and special educators, and monitoring of the delivery of services.

Accommodating special needs in testing situations should be viewed as a part of the total education program for students with handicapping conditions. The Committee on the Handicapped considers each student's need for alternative testing techniques when making recommendations to parents and the Board of Education.

Legal References

Parts 100 and 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education provide for the use of alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions. The Part 100 Regulations stress equal access to curricular activities with appropriate modifications for a student with a handicapping condition. As stated in Section 100.2(s), "each student with a handicapping condition... shall have access to the full range of programs and services," and "instructional techniques and materials used by schools shall be modified to the extent appropriate to provide the opportunity for students with handicapping conditions to meet diploma requirements." Accordingly, a student with a handicapping condition must be afforded the opportunity to participate in testing situations and must be provided with appropriate modifications.

Section 100.2(g), in reference to the State Education Department's examinations, indicates that "students identified by the Committee on the Handicapped as having a handicapping condition" qualify for the use of alternative testing procedures, and "alternative testing procedures employed shall be based upon students' individual needs and the type of test administered." Thus, a student with a handicapping condition is ensured equal access to the required statewide examinations through the use of alternative testing techniques. Under this section, students whose native language is other than English also qualify for use of alternative testing techniques. Consequently, for students with handicapping conditions whose native language is other than English, language proficiency should also be considered when determining need for alternative testing techniques.

In addition, the Part 200 Regulations give the Committee on the Handicapped responsibility for determining a student's need for alternative testing techniques. Section 200.4(c)(2) directs the COH to include in the student's Phase I IEP a listing of testing modifications to be used by the student. It also requires that these modifications be used consistently throughout the student's educational program.

With these purposes and guidelines in mind, the Committee on the Handi capped has the responsibility to review a student's needs in order to make meaningful recommendations to the Board of Education and parents of a student with a handicapping condition regarding the use of alternative testing techniques.

Student Eligibility for Use of Alternative Testing Techniques

A student who has been identified by the COH as having a handicapping condition may be eligible to use alternative testing techniques. Eligibility is determined on an individual basis according to each student's unique needs.

In addition, the need for testing modifications and the specific alternative testing techniques to be used must be reflected consistently in Phase I of the student's IEP. At each annual review, the COH reevaluates the student's need for testing modifications. Based on the student's continuing need, the COH determines the alternative testing techniques to be recommended on Phase I of the IEP.

At times, the COH may determine that a student who is no longer in need of special education or related services requires the continued use of alternative testing techniques. For example, a student who has been classified as emotionally disturbed and has required special education and related services may have progressed so as to no longer require these services. The student may be able to receive all instruction in regular education classes with only those sup-

port services which are available to all students. Because of increased anxiety during testing, however, the student may require both extended time and small group administration during examinations. This student should not continue to be classified as having a handicapping condition based solely on the need for testing modifications. Students who are not classified as having a handicapping condition, but who have specific difficulties that necessitate modifications of testing procedures or formats, however, may be provided with alternative testing techniques which do not alter the intended purpose of the test. The building principal has the authority to approve the use of alternative testing techniques which do not alter the intended purpose of a test for nonhandicapped students.

At the time of declassification from special education, the COH is responsible for determining a student's need for continued use of testing modifications and for including a definition of these needs in the committee's recommendation to the Board of Education. The recommendation should define the effect of the student's continuing needs on testing situations and the appropriate alternative testing techniques the student continues to need. Upon approval of the recommendation by the Board of Education, the building principal is responsible for ensuring the consistent and appropriate use of the approved alternative testing techniques.

Criteria for Decision Making

Members of Committees on the Handicapped consider several factors when making decisions regarding the use of alternative testing techniques. As stated previously, consideration of student need is paramount.

When Committees are determining student need, emphasis is placed on the necessity for modification, not merely the potential benefit from modification. Since almost all students can benefit from the use of alternative testing techniques, a recommendation based solely on potential to enhance performance beyond a level which would constitute equal and fair participation is inappropriate. Using this guideline, it is certain that not all handicapped students need alternative testing techniques and the need, when it exists, can vary according to different testing circumstances. The different perspectives that various COH members bring to this multidisciplinary setting help to ensure that each student receives a fair and comprehensive assessment of the need for alternative testing techniques.

TYPES OF ALTERNATIVE TESTING TECHNIQUES

Alternative testing techniques can modify the way test items are presented to a student, the student's method of responding to test items or the process a student uses to derive responses to test items. The alternative testing techniques recommended for use should modify the standard administration of a test to the least extent possible.

Committees on the Handicapped, with input from parents and teachers, have the responsibility and the authority to recommend all appropriate modifications that a student may require, as long as the modifications are not prohibited by the testing authority for specific tests. "Testing authority" refers to the author, publisher, or sponsor of the test, who is responsible for its construction, use and validity. Several alternative testing techniques are described below. Every possible modification that may be appropriate for students is not included, since student needs are too diverse to attempt to address all possible situations.

Modifications of Manner of Presentation

Alternative testing techniques that modify the way test items are presented to students are the most numerous and most frequently used techniques. Modifications of test presentation can be grouped in the following categories: flexible scheduling, flexible setting, revised test format, revised test directions, and use of aids.

Flexible Scheduling: Some students with handicapping conditions may require flexible scheduling of examinations. These students may have learning disabilities or behavioral characteristics which affect the rate at which they process information. Physical disabilities, such as visual or motor impairments, may decrease students' working rate. Students who use other test modifications, such as special equipment to record responses or dictating responses to an amanuensis, may also complete examinations more slowly. Other students who are health impaired may tire easily or require frequent breaks. All of these students may require testing modifications which alter the scheduling of the test in order to demonstrate knowledge and skills on an equal basis with other students.

Examples of flexible scheduling include extending the time allowed for the student to complete the examination. Administering the test in several brief sessions within one day or over several days is yet another alternative.

The decision regarding which technique is appropriate depends on student needs and the test to be administered. In all cases, the scheduling modification should be the minimum deviation from the standard administration of the test that is required. Students who work more slowly but can complete the entire examination in one session should be provided only the modification of extending the total time allowed for the examination. Such students would not require administration of the test over several sessions.

On the other hand, students who work at a normal rate but tire easily or require frequent breaks due to behavioral characteristics or health reasons should not be given additional time to work on the examination. These students should be given the standard time allowed, but the test should be administered in timed segments, with breaks between sessions. Other students may require a combination of flexible scheduling arrangements.

When reviewing the tests to be administered, any restrictions imposed by the testing authority must be considered. Some tests are specifically designed to measure the rate at which students complete certain tasks. For these tests, modifications to the total amount of time allowed for test administration may not be permitted. Other tests are "secure" examinations (e.g., Regents Examinations) and must be administered during a specific time period in order to maintain test security. For this type of test, the flexible scheduling techniques of extended time and additional rest periods may be allowed, so long as the tests are completed on the day scheduled and the security of the test is maintained. The test manual should be consulted to determine the modifications that are allowed.

Flexible Setting: For some students with handicapping conditions, the standard location for test administration may not be appropriate. Some students are easily distracted or have difficulty remaining on task. Some students require the use of specialized equipment or other test modifications which may be distracting to others. Other students, due to severe health impairments, are unable to leave their home or the hospital. Others with visual or auditory impairments may require special lighting or special acoustics. All of these students require changes in the standard test setting.

Examples of flexible setting modifications include individual or small group administration in a separate location, and provision of special lighting, acoustics, or furniture in the same or a different location. In all instances, the special location should be one that is appropriate for test administration. Students should not be required to take examinations in corridors or other uncomfortable locations. In addition, test administration should follow the standard procedures regardless of location, and modifications of the setting should be the minimum that are required.

Revised Test Format: Some students with handicapping conditions may not be able to take a test using the standard test format. Some students with visual, perceptual, or motor impairments do not have the ability to read regular size print. Other students with behavioral, visual, perceptual, or motor impairments have difficulty maintaining their place in a standard examination booklet. Some students with learning disabilities are unable to read items with standard print and spacing. All of these students would require some modification of the test format.

Alternative testing techniques which modify the test format include: transcription of the test to braille or large print; increasing the spacing between test items; changing the size, shape, or location of the space for answers; and placing fewer items on each page. Changing the format of reading passages so that complete sentences are located on a single line is yet another technique.

The alternative testing techniques provided to students should be the minimum modification necessary, yet should be sufficient to allow the student to participate on an equal basis. For example, all students may benefit by increasing the spacing between test items. However, this alternative testing technique should be provided only to students with handicapping conditions who would not be able to answer test items or complete the test without this modification.

Modifications of test format, such as braille editions or test forms with fewer items on each page, may not be available for all standardized tests. In some instances, modifications can be made on an individual basis at the local school level. For example, a standard test form could be altered to increase spacing between items, or to change the location of spaces for providing answers. Prior to modifying the test format, the test manual or testing authority should be consulted to ensure that such modifications are not prohibited.

On some tests, students with handicapping conditions may be unable to complete a test item due to the item format. Whenever possible, the format of the item should be changed to allow the student to complete the item. However, this is not always possible. For example, some test items cannot be reproduced in braille. Similarly, items which are presented auditorily cannot always be signed to pupils with hearing impairments without changing the purpose of the item. In these specific instances, when questions cannot be interpreted or relayed to students, such questions should be omitted from the examination and the credit for the question prorated.

Omitting questions and prorating credit should not be used to eliminate items which students cannot answer due to lack of ability related to the skills or content being tested. Great care must be taken to differentiate between the inability to complete an item due to item format and the inability to complete an item due to lack of competence in the skills being measured.

Revised Test Directions: In addition to revising the format of tests, revisions are sometimes made to the test directions in order to enable students with handicapping conditions to complete the test. Some students with behavioral or learning disabilities may be unable to interpret directions. Students with visual, perceptual, or motor impairments may be unable to read and interpret lengthy directions. These students may require modifications to test instructions.

Some examples of changes in test directions include rewriting directions in simple language, underlining key words in directions, or providing a set of directions for each new set of skills in the examination. Reading the standard directions several times at the start of the examination and rereading them for each new page of test items is another example.

Only a student who would be unable to complete test items without changing the standard instructions should be provided with this alternative testing technique. The degree of modification to the instructions should be the minimum required. The individual administering the test should be sure that the student understands the instructions, but should not provide additional information. Care must be taken to ensure that the integrity of the test is not compromised by changes made to the standard test directions.

Use of Aids: Some students with handicapping conditions require the assistance of special equipment or testing personnel in order to interpret test items.

Students who have visual, perceptual, or motor impairments may be unable to read test items without assistance. Students with hearing impairments may be unable to hear items presented auditorily. Students with behavioral, motor, visual, or learning disabilities may be unable to maintain their place or stay on task during the examination. These students require the use of aids during testing.

Some examples of special equipment which students may use include visual magnification devices, auditory amplification devices, auditory tapes of test items, and masks or markers which cover a portion of the examination or mark the student's place. The use of equipment, rather than personnel, helps to maintain maximum reliability and validity of test results. Proctor assistance, however, may be essential to meet the needs of some students in testing situations. Examples of proctor assistance that students may require include reading test items or providing cues to maintain on-task behavior. When a proctor reads test items to a student, the regular examination booklet is used and items are read as they appear on the page. Test items should be read or signed only to those students whose reading ability is impaired because of a handicapping condition.

When providing assistance, a proctor should follow standard administration procedures and provide only the minimum assistance that is required by the student. The student's need for testing modifications, as defined on the IEP, provides the proctor with guidelines for assisting the student during test administration.

Examples of Alternative Testing Techniques Which Modify Manner of Presentation

Category	Examples
Flexible Scheduling	• extend the time allotted to complete the test • administer the test in several sessions during the day • administer the test in several sessions over several days
Flexible Setting	• administer the test individually in separate location • administer the test to a small group in separate location • provide special lighting • provide adaptive or special furniture • provide special acoustics • administer test in location with minimal distractions
Revised Test Format	• braille edition • large print edition • increase spacing between items • reduce number of items per page • increase size of answer bubble • print reading passages with only one complete sentence per line • arrange answer choices, for multiple choice items, in vertical format with answer bubble to right of each possible choice • omit questions which cannot be revised, pro-rate credit
Revised Test Directions	• read directions to student • reread directions for each page of questions • simplify language in directions • highlight verbs in instructions by underlining • provide additional examples
Use of Aids	• visual magnification devices • auditory amplification devices • auditory tape of questions • masks or markers to maintain place • questions read to student • questions signed to student

Modifications of Manner of Response

While most alternative testing techniques modify the way test items are presented to students, some students with handicapping conditions require alternative testing techniques which modify the manner by which a student responds. These alternative testing techniques can be grouped in two categories: use of aids to record responses and revisions of the test's answer form.

Use of Aids: Some students who have motor, visual, or learning disabilities which affect their ability to write may be unable to record their responses to examination questions in the conventional manner. These students require the use of aids to be able to participate in the test on an equal basis with other students.

Some students use equipment to enable them to record responses. Examples of such equipment include typewriters, word processors, pointers, communication boards, and adaptive writing instruments. Other students may need to dictate their answers to a tape recorder or an amanuensis.

In general, the student who uses an aid to record responses must provide all information regarding spelling of difficult words, punctuation, paragraphing, grammar, etc. Only those students whose handicapping condition affects abilities in spelling and punctuation should be exempted from providing such information when dictating responses.

Revised Answer Form: Some students with handicapping conditions are unable to record their responses to test questions on the standard answer form. Some students with visual, motor, behavioral, or learning disabilities are unable to move from the test booklet to the answer form to record responses. Such students require modifications to the answer format. Examples of ways to modify the answer form are changing the size or location of the space for responses, or allowing students to record answers directly in the test booklet.

Examples of Alternative Testing Techniques Which Modify Method of Response

Category	Examples
Use of Aids	• amanuensis • tape recorder • typewriter • communication device • word processor
Revised Format	• record answers in test booklet • increase spacing • increase size of answer blocks • provide cues (arrows, stop sign) on answer form

Modifications of Process Used to Derive Responses

Some students with handicapping conditions require alternative testing techniques which modify the process used to derive answers to test questions. The use of aids is the primary modification of this type.

Use of Aids: Some students have the reasoning ability to complete narrative mathematics problems and involved computations, but may have visual or motor impairments which make them unable to use paper and pencil to solve computations. Some students with handicapping conditions are unable to memorize arithmetic facts but can solve difficult word problems. These students may require the use of computational aids, such as arithmetic tables, abacuses, or calculators. Only those students whose handicapping condition affects the student's ability to either memorize or compute basic math facts should be allowed to use computational aids.

Examples of Alternative Testing Techniques Which Modify Process Used to Derive Response

Category	Examples
Use of Aids	• calculator • abacus • arithmetic tables

TYPES OF TESTS

Elementary and secondary level students are exposed to a wide variety of tests on local, State and national levels, some of which are mandated and others of which are optional. Students with handicapping conditions must be provided the same access to the full range of tests as nonhandicapped students.

Most tests are either norm-referenced or criterion-referenced. Norm-referenced tests are tests which are standardized on groups of individuals. Such tests measure a student's performance relative to the performance of a group of individuals with similar characteristics. Tests which are administered at the district, State, or national level are usually norm-referenced.

Criterion-referenced tests measure a student's achievement or development relative to a specific standard. Such tests are especially useful for planning instruction or measuring curriculum content mastery because they can correspond closely to curriculum content and classroom instruction. Tests which are selected or developed and administered by the classroom teacher are generally criterion-referenced.

Regardless of whether a test is criterion- or norm-referenced, appropriate alternative testing techniques must be made available to handicapped students who have a documented need. Testing modifications which have been approved for students must be used consistently in all instructional settings.

Examples of Tests

There are four components of the statewide testing program for which students may require the use of alternative testing techniques. These programs are the Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP), the Preliminary Competency Testing Program (PCT), the Regents Competency Testing Program (RCT), and the Regents Examination Program (RE). In addition to the statewide testing program, many high school-age students take the test of General Educational Development (GED) or the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).

These tests are included on the chart below which lists the individual tests, the grades when they are commonly administered, and guidelines for use of certain alternative testing techniques. All techniques which are allowed during administration of these tests are not included in this chart. Many of these have been described in the previous section of this manual. The chart below provides clarification regarding the use of certain modifications and describes any restrictions imposed by the testing authority. This chart can be useful as a convenient reference guide for school district personnel who must comply with these guidelines when planning for and implementing the provision of alternative testing techniques.

Guidelines for Use of Alternative Testing Techniques

Grade*	Test	Guidelines & Restrictions
3+6	PEP Math	Use of computational aids is allowed only for those students whose handicapping condition impairs ability to memorize or compute basic math facts.
3+6	PEP Reading	Test may be read or signed to only those students whose handicapping condition impairs ability to gain meaning from printed materials.
5	PEP Writing	Answers may be recorded in any manner. Students should provide spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, etc., except for those students whose handicapping condition impairs abilities in spelling and punctuation.
8/9	PCT Reading	Test may be read or signed to only those students whose handicapping condition impairs ability to gain meaning from printed materials.
8/9	PCT Writing	Answers may be recorded in any manner. Student should provide spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, etc., except for those students whose handicapping condition impairs abilities in spelling and punctuation.
9-12	RCT Math	Use of computational aids is allowed only for those students whose handicapping condition impairs ability to

		memorize or compute basic math facts. Complete test must be administered in one day.
11-12	RCT Reading	Test may be read or signed to only those students whose handicapping condition impairs ability to gain meaning from printed materials. Complete test must be administered in one day.
11-12	RCT Writing	Answers may be recorded in any manner. Students should provide spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, etc., except for those students whose handicapping condition impairs abilities in spelling and punctuation. Complete test must be administered in one day, or separate parts of the test may be given over successive administrations of the test.
9-12	RE**-All Examinations	Complete test must be administered in one day. Only those modifications that do not affect the skills being tested are allowed.
9-12	RE-Math	Use of a calculator is not allowed.
9-12	RE-English, Foreign Language Examinations	No reading comprehension items may be read or signed to students.
	SAT	Students with documented learning disabilities or visual, physical, or hearing handicaps are eligible for alternative testing techniques. Computational aids are prohibited. No items may be omitted.
	GED	Each test must be completed on the day that it is started; all tests must be completed within two weeks. Candidates who are visually impaired or who have visual perceptual disabilities may use an audiocassette edition and an abacus. Reading of test questions is not allowed; use of a calculator is prohibited. Only test instructions may be signed to candidates who are hearing impaired or deaf.

* For students in ungraded programs, the student's chronological age should be used to determine when to administer the test.

** Regents Examinations

In addition to the tests listed in the chart above, there are many other standardized tests which students may take during their schooling. The number and variety of these tests preclude their inclusion in this chart. In each case, the testing authority sets the guidelines for both standard and nonstandard administration. Procedures for test administration and descriptions of restrictions are included in most test manuals. Resources which provide additional information on the administration of the tests listed here and others are included in the final section of this manual.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Many individuals are involved in the process which results in the use of alternative testing techniques by pupils with handicapping conditions. These include members of the Board of Education, the Committee on the Handicapped, the building principal, special and regular education teachers, and parents. The purpose of this section is to define the role of each and to provide suggestions for carrying out responsibilities.

Board of Education

Two important responsibilities of the Board of Education are the establishment and dissemination of school district policies and the review of recommendations made by the Committee on the Handicapped for students with handicapping conditions.

With regard to alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions, members of the Board need to be familiar with the different types of alternative testing techniques and the manner by which these are matched to individual student needs. District policies can emphasize that the use of these techniques is consistent with the school district's responsibility to maintain educational standards, and does, in fact, enhance the school's ability to allow all students equal access to the full-range of instructional and testing opportunities.

Procedures regarding the use of alternative testing techniques should be consistent for all schools within the district and should be fully understood by members of the COH, building administrators, teachers, related services personnel, other school staff, and parents. One means of ensuring this would be the inclusion of this topic in districtwide training programs. Because principals are responsible for ensuring implemention of COH recommendations regarding alternative testing techniques, district policy should identify the procedure by which principals are informed of such recommendations. This might be done by including the principal among those who regularly receive copies of Phase I IEP's which include alternative testing techniques. Procedures should also indicate the manner in which the school district will report the use of alternative testing techniques to the Education Department as required by section 100.2(g)(3) of the Regulations of the Commissioner.

In reviewing recommendations from the Committee on the Handicapped, Board members decide on the appropriateness of alternative testing techniques as well as other recommended services. Appropriateness is determined by how closely the techniques are matched to both the individual needs of the students and the purpose of the test or tests to be administered.

Committee on the Handicapped

The Committee on the Handicapped is responsible for identifying and documenting the student's need for alternative testing techniques. This determination is made when a student is initially referred to the COH, is reviewed annually for as long as the student receives special education services, and is reviewed when the student is determined to no longer need special education services.

In making its decision, the COH reviews all available information regarding the student's individual needs. Such information might include recent evaluations, previous school records, IEPs, classroom observations, and the student's experience on previous tests. Information and suggestions from the student's teachers, related service providers, and parents might also be sought.

Members of the Committee on the Handicapped should be knowledgeable of the types and varieties of testing modifications that may be used by students with handicapping conditions, the types of tests that are commonly administered and the purposes of each, and the specific alternative testing techniques which are prohibited for use on certain tests. Such information may be obtained from teachers, school testing personnel, the principal, and testing authorities.

The COH records its recommendations for alternative testing modifications on the Phase I IEP for review and approval by the Board of Education. Such recommendations will serve as a guideline for further IEP development and are documented in the objective criteria and evaluation procedures of the Phase II IEP.

School Principal

The principal in each school is responsible for implementing the district's policies which provide equal access to instructional and testing programs for all students. Principals have direct responsibility for authorizing the use of alternative testing techniques by students who have special testing needs but who are not educationally handicapped. In addition, prin-

cipals ensure that students who have been identified by the COH as educationally handicapped are provided the alternative testing techniques which have been recommended by the COH and approved by the Board of Education. These are listed on a student's IEP. Principals, therefore, have responsibility for making sure that teachers and other appropriate school personnel receive information and training on the consistent and appropriate use of alternative testing techniques.

Pursuant to section 102.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner, principals are given responsibility for administering all Education Department examinations according to procedures established by the Commissioner. This includes ordering examinations, ensuring proper administration, and reporting scores. During the administration of the statewide testing program, principals make sure that students are provided with the testing modifications which have been included on the IEP, and ensure that only those testing modifications permitted for State tests are used.

Special Education Teacher

The special education teacher's direct contact with the student in classroom instruction and testing provides a strong basis for recommending appropriate testing modifications for that student. The special education teacher may be the individual to initially recognize a student's need for testing modifications. That teacher, therefore, can provide the COH with essential information for revision of the student's Phase I IEP when testing modifications are recommended. The teacher or administrator of special education who serves as a mandated member of the COH may be involved in recommending alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions at the time of initial referral to the committee.

In addition, the special education teacher participates with the student's parents and other individuals in the planning conference to develop Phase II of the student's IEP. A statement of short-term objectives, evaluation criteria, procedures, and any modifications necessary to determine whether instructional objectives are being achieved are included in Phase II.

The special education teacher should work closely with related service providers and regular education teachers who provide services to students with handicapping conditions. This cooperative relationship ensures consistent and appropriate use of instructional and testing modifications in all settings. The special education teacher may serve as a consultant to provide information and advice on testing modifications for students, and may also provide direct assistance to school staff in development and administration of tests using testing modifications which are included in a student's IEP.

Regular Education Teacher

The regular classroom teacher has an active and significant role in the use of alternative testing techniques for students with handicapping conditions. The Regents Action Plan and the Part 100 Regulations which implement the Plan, require that students with handicapping conditions have full access to programs and services. Teachers are expected to be able to work effectively with all students who are appropriately placed in their classes. In some instances, this will require that regular education teachers modify or adapt instruction and testing.

Alternative testing techniques which have been approved for use by a student must be used consistently in both special and regular education settings. Regular classroom teachers should be aware of possible alternative testing techniques and should be skilled in their implementation. Strategies to assist teachers in preparing for this responsibility include a review of the current literature on the subject, attendance at available in-service training, and consultation with special education teachers and the Committee on the Handicapped.

The regular educator may participate in the planning conference to develop the Phase II portion of the IEP for students who will be attending regular education classes. In order for a student to have equal opportunity to demonstrate mastery of instructional objectives in all settings, regular and special education teachers plan together for use of alternative testing procedures.

Parents may have questions about the use of alternative testing techniques within the context of the regular education setting. As the teacher providing instruction in a given subject area, regular education teachers communicate with parents regarding the nature and rationale of the techniques in use.

Parents

Parents are encouraged to exercise their right to participate in the development of recommendations for special education programs and services for their child who has a handicapping condition. Parents,

knowing the strengths and weaknesses of their son or daughter, should contribute to the discussion about the need for alternative testing techniques. This opportunity exists both at the Phase I COH meeting and the Phase II planning conference. Providing such information to appropriate persons at these meetings, or at other times during the year, will help to ensure that an appropriate program is being provided. Parents should be aware of the purpose of testing modifications and understand the rationale for their existence.

Parents who believe that their handicapped child is being denied appropriate use of alternative testing techniques may request a meeting with the COH. The parents may also pursue the due process procedures of an impartial hearing and subsequent appeal to the Commissioner.

Parents should have adequate information regarding the variety and use of alternative testing techniques. Such information may be obtained from members of the Committee on the Handicapped, the principal, and teachers.

RESOURCES ON MODIFICATIONS FOR SPECIFIC TESTS

For each test, the test publisher and any available literature on special testing procedures have been listed.

American College Testing (ACT) Assessment Program

Publisher:
The American College Testing Program
2201 North Dodge Street
P.O. Box 168
Iowa City, Iowa 52243

Publications:
The ACT Assessment Special Testing Guide
American College Testing Program

Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP) Preliminary Competency Tests (PCT)

Publisher:
New York State Education Department
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing Programs
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-5099

Publications:
New York State Pupil Evaluation Program and Preliminary Competency Tests: School Administrator's Manual

Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMQT)

Publisher:
The College Board
Educational Testing Service
Princeton, NJ 08541-6602
(609) 734-1149

Publications:
Supervisor's Manual for Administration of PSAT/NMQT

Regents Examinations (RE)/Regents Competency Tests (RCT)

Publisher:
New York State Education Department
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing Programs
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-5099

Publications:
Regents Examinations and Competency Tests: School Administrator's Manual

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT)

Publisher:
The College Board
Educational Testing Services
Princeton, NJ 08541-6602
(609) 734-1149

Publications:
Information for Students with Special Needs: Services for Handicapped Students

Test of General Education Development (GED)

Publisher:
GED Testing Service
One Dupont Circle
Washington, D.C. 20036
(202) 939-9490

Publications:
Informational Brochure for the New York State High School Equivalency Program

Published by:
New York State Education Department
Bureau of Elementary and Secondary Testing Programs
Albany, NY 12234
(518) 474-5099